

Story 1110 (1966 Tape 5)

Narrator: Mustafa Boylu, in 50s,
wholesale greengrocer

Location: Ankara

Date: Summer 1966

The Fruit That Changed

A villager once went to the city to sell his goods. As he was preparing to return home, he decided to take his children something that they would like. He selected some purple ripe figs from a market stand, but he did not know the name of this fruit. He liked their taste, however, and he thought that his children would enjoy them.

His children had never seen such fruit before, but they found the figs very tasty. "Please bring us back some more of fruit the next time you go to the city," they pleaded.

Five or six months later the villager had to go to the city again to sell his wares. He remembered that his children requested more of the fruit he had brought them, but not knowing its name, he could not ask for it. He looked in stall after stall in the marketplace without finding any ripe figs. They were now out of season, but he did not know that. He finally saw a large greengrocer's stand and he went there and asked for the kind of fruit he wanted. "It is purple," he said. "The outside is like leather and the inside is like corn. Do have any of that kind of fruit?"

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The greengrocer thought he was probably talking about eggplants,¹ and so he filled the villager's bag with this vegetable. The villager started home, but as he was resting along the way, he decided to taste the fruit he had bought. He was greatly disappointed, for, of course, the eggplant did not taste at all like ripe figs. He said to the eggplant, "You are the fruit I have been seeking, all right, but you have remained too long in the orchard. You have overgrown so much that your flavor has changed completely."

¹ Both eggplant and ripe figs are purple. Both have tough skins. And both are just filled with seeds.